



GOLD HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Student Handbook & Agenda

2024 – 2025



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School Motto

Excellence is our cornerstone, our tradition, the Bulldog way!

Vision

Gold Hill Middle School, distinguished as a school of excellence, is centered on student learning that focuses on the academic, social, and emotional growth that bridges the transition for students between elementary and high school.

Mission

The mission of Gold Hill Middle School is to provide learners with a rigorous education where all students are valued, and the faculty exhibits academic excellence by advancing knowledge through high expectations, collaboration, and engagement.

Beliefs

Here are Gold Hill Middle School, we believe:

- The learning environment will be emotionally safe, physically safe, healthy, nurturing, and positive.
- Our students will be held to consistent high expectations academically and behaviorally.
- Students will be given the opportunity to be successful.
- Good citizenship is important and valued.
- Students are more successful when there are positive relationships between the school, parents, and community.

THIS STUDENT PLANNER BELONGS TO:

Name _____ Grade _____ Homeroom _____

P.E. Locker # _____ P.E. Locker Combination _____

Username & Passwords	
Parent Portal/PowerSchool	Google Log-In
IXL	Student ID/Lunch Number
Other	Other

Welcome

Welcome to Gold Hill Middle School! We are excited about this upcoming school year and want to welcome you all to the Bulldog Family! Administrators, teachers, and school staff are here to assist you in any way possible. It is our goal to help you reach your fullest potential inside and outside of the classroom. Middle school is a time of change and an important transition from elementary to high school. The workload, levels of responsibility, extracurricular activities, and social adjustments are greater than those experienced at elementary school. The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize yourself with expectations and regulations here at GHMS. We ask that you take some time to go over this document carefully with your parent or guardian. If you have any questions, please ask a staff member. We look forward to working together to make this school year a success for you, your classmates, and all of the Bulldog family.

Please review, sign, and return by August 16th.

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Student:

Fort Mill School District believes it is very important to inform you and your student of the rules of conduct we expect in the Fort Mill Schools. Students have been provided this Gold Hill Middle School Student Handbook & Agenda which also outlines the expectations, guidelines, rules, and consequences regarding student academic and behavioral expectations. Please read the handbook section carefully and discuss its contents together as needed.

We feel, as you do, that school should be a safe and orderly place to learn. This is part of our attempt to provide students with the best education possible. With your help, we continually strive for excellence and embrace the challenge together of making the most of each and every day.

Fort Mill School District (FMSD) provides students with a variety of technology in an effort to support and enhance the academic, social, and emotional achievement of students in the district. In alignment with the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP*) established by our district, we have created a set of rules and regulations hereby known as the FMSD Responsible Use Plan (RUP). This plan is intended to ensure the safety and privacy of our students, to protect data and our resources, and to safeguard the overall integrity of both the FMSD and its students. We request that parents/guardians and students familiarize themselves with the RUP as outlined below.

Technology Responsible Use Plan (RUP)

The following rules and procedures apply to all students enrolled in district schools on and off campus.

Access to district internet is for educational purposes only.

Students must:

1. Respect their own privacy and the privacy of others
 - a. Use only assigned accounts, keep personal information such as name, address, phone number, etc. offline, keep passwords secret
 - b. Have permission to photograph/videotape others and to subsequently save and/or post these images/videos to the Internet
 - c. FMSD cannot assume responsibility for lost or stolen information sent or received via the district's communication resources
 - d. Documents may not include: student phone number, address, full name of self or others (first name only)
2. Respect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources
 - a. Observe all network security practices while also protecting and sharing these resources with other users
 - b. FMSD is not responsible for damages to personal digital technologies or electronic communication devices
 - c. Treat digital technologies with care and report any damages, security risks, or violations to a teacher or administrator

3. Respect the copyrighted/intellectual property of others to assure academic integrity
 - a. Cite all sources appropriately and follow all copyright laws and utilize electronic communication devices properly
 - b. Do not use information technology to cheat on assignments or plagiarize the work of others, including submitting AI generated work as original work

4. Respect and practice the principles of community
 - a. Communicate only in ways that are kind, responsible, respectful and lawful
 - b. Use electronic communication devices (including FMSD email) for school work only
 - c. Report threatening or offensive materials to a teacher or administrator

5. Prohibited email usage including all of the following
 - a. Create or transmit any emails containing content reasonably perceived as threatening, obscene, sexual, racist, or discriminating
 - b. Setting up or operating a commercial business
 - c. Email signatures should not include religious statements, political statements, or group affiliations

Students who witness, experience, or otherwise learn about a suspected violation should report the matter to a teacher or administrator. FMSD reserves the right to monitor and/or review all uses of the district network, Internet usage, and activity.

***The AUP can be found on the FMSD website under Departments > Technology Services**

We have read the Gold Hill Middle School Handbook. Although we may not agree with all of the regulations, we understand that each student must adhere to these rules while at school or in attendance at school sponsored activities. In the event that we are not entirely certain of some aspects of school policy, we will contact the principal for clarification within one week after receipt of this policy.

Parent Signature(s) _____

Student Signature _____ Print Name _____

Homeroom Teacher _____ Date _____

Please review, sign, and return by August 16th.

Student Handbook & Agenda

Each student receives one GHMS Handbook & Agenda. Students are expected to use the agenda pages to record daily assignments, quizzes, project deadlines, and other school related tasks. We ask that this agenda be taken home each day and returned to school the next day. Students are expected to have their agendas for every class period every day. This will help students strengthen their organization and study skills, and it will help prepare them for success. Students may not use or possess another student's agenda. We will have a limited amount of extras that may be purchased in the event of loss or damage to this one. A replacement agenda is \$5.00.

Registration Fees

It is the desire of Gold Hill Middle School to ensure that all students have a meaningful academic, social, and developmental experience while enrolled. The student registration fee is used to assist the school in this effort and allows the programmatic objectives to be enhanced. The student registration fee is utilized to assist in the development and evaluation of student programs that promote student growth and development beyond the classroom. The fee provides additional resources for students in the following areas:

- Gold Hill Middle School Student Handbook & Agenda
- Supplementary materials for character education and career education programs
- Make Today Count Program
- Student Celebrations and Assemblies
- School-Wide Activities/Speakers
- Student Activity Scholarship Program

Parent Contact Information

It is vital that we have your current address, email, and phone number on file at all times. This information is especially important in case of emergency. Please notify the school office immediately if this information changes. You must provide residency verification regarding any address changes.

School Counseling

The comprehensive school counseling program provides services to students, parents, and staff. This service is consistent with identified student needs in academic, career, and personal/social areas. Our counselors provide consulting, referral, and intervention to support student success. Parents may contact the school counselor to request assistance for their children. We also have a behavioral interventionist, school psychologist, and mental health counselor on staff at GHMS.

Mrs. Ashley DiMaggio – 6th Grade School Counselor dimaggioa@fortmillschools.org 803-548-8306

Mr. Marc Wesseling – 7th Grade School Counselor wesselingm@fortmillschools.org 803-548-8307

Ms. Lisa Ross – 8th Grade School Counselor rossl@fortmillschools.org 803-548-8311

Car Riders

AM/PM Car Riders: Parents, thank you for pulling your cars up as far forward as possible before allowing your children to exit and enter your vehicles. We offer supervision for our car rider arrivals and departures. Thank you for paying attention to the directions of the staff on duty and for not being on your cell phones while in car lines. These requests are for the safety of all students, staff, and others during this busy time of the school day.

Teacher and bus parking areas are off limits for car rider drop off and pick up purposes.

Morning: **ALL** car riders enter the building through the **Main Entrance**.

Afternoon: All car riders report to their designated areas as outlined below.

Sixth grade students will use the **elementary loop** for afternoon (PM) car pick-up. Sixth grade students will exit using the bus loop doors to report to the elementary walk way/covered area where they will wait for PM pick up.

Seventh and eighth grade students are picked up using the **GHMS loop**. They should exit the building through the **Main Entrance** at the front of the school to wait in the car rider line area. Thank you for loading your students within the blue outlined pick up areas for safety and supervision purposes.

Bus Riders

Bus Riders: When the dismissal bell rings, bus students report to their buses by exiting the doors at the bus lot. A sign will be available to help the students locate their buses. Adults will also be on supervisory duty.

Transportation for students attending school in SC is provided subject to the approval of the transportation office. School officials have no authority to alter bus routes or stops without the proper approval. All bus drivers are properly certified and licensed by the SC Highway Department. Only those students who are eligible for school bus transportation may ride the bus. A bus rider will not be allowed to ride a bus other than the bus assigned to him/her. Students, who may need to ride a bus other than their assigned bus, or get off at another stop other than their assigned stop, must have prior written approval. Approval is granted or denied by the transportation department in conjunction with administration and may take up to 24 hours or longer. **Please do not wait until the day the request is needed to make arrangements.** Our goal is to assure that all school buses provide safe transportation for all students and that all students who ride the bus exhibit good citizenship while on the bus. Students who are disruptive on the bus may be denied the privilege of riding the bus.

Enforcing the safety and welfare of all student bus riders is a coordinated effort between district transportation and school administration. While the transportation liaison is the primary investigator and disciplinarian regarding bus incidents/infractions, the school administration reserves the right to issue further disciplinary actions.

For safety reasons, students are not permitted to carry large items (such as large musical instruments, balloons, flower arrangements, sports equipment, and cumbersome school projects, etc.) onto the bus. Food and drinks are not permitted on the buses.

School Day

Arrival: The school day for students is from **8:10am - 3:10pm**. The building opens at **7:45am**. Students report to their homeroom when they enter the building unless they are going to the cafeteria for breakfast. Students who bring beverages for “morning consumption” – other than water – (i.e. iced coffees, frappuccinos, smoothies, etc.) must report to the cafeteria to consume these items. Students are expected to be in their homerooms and seated by 8:10 so we may start our day promptly. Our security doors lock at 8:10am each morning. Students wishing to visit our media center or meet with another teacher on another hallway, including related arts, **must have a pass**. Students should report to their homeroom first to check in with their teacher and obtain a pass.

Dismissal: All students are to exit the building immediately after they are dismissed. All students should be picked up by **3:40 pm**

Tardiness: A student is considered tardy if he/she arrives too late to be able to be in his/her homeroom seat when the 8:10am bell rings. Excessive tardies can be treated as truancy. Students will receive in school consequences after three (3) unexcused tardies to school. The fourth and each subsequent unexcused tardy per quarter (nine weeks) will result in a lunch detention. The lunch detention will be served in the ISS room. Tardy accumulation will start over at the beginning of each quarter/nine weeks. Students are also expected to be on time for each class period. Consequences for core and related arts classroom tardies will be determined by each team, grade level, or teacher.

Early Dismissal: Students may not be dismissed from school between 2:40 – 3:10 pm. In order to avoid interruptions in the educational program, we ask that students not leave school before 3:10 pm. Whenever possible, medical and dental appointments should be made after school hours. The student will not be called from class until the parent arrives to pick him/her up. All parents should report to the office when picking up their child for early dismissal. We will then request that your child be sent to the office to meet you. Parents must sign their child out on the computer in the office. The office personnel will refer to your child's Early Dismissal Checkout Sheet on which you have listed the names of the people who have permission to pick up your child. Only the people listed will be allowed to pick up your child. The person must present picture identification. Please have all information on file in the front office and update this information as needed. You may email Mrs. Hudson at HUDSONN@FORTMILLSCHOOLS.ORG to request a google link or form to update this information for your student. Office personnel will not release your child to anyone if the Early Dismissal Checkout Sheet is not on file in the office. Notes or telephone calls will not be accepted. Emergency situations will be handled on a case by case basis by the administrative team and/or our School Resource Officer.

Early Dismissal Due to Inclement Weather: Please inform your student about the procedure you expect him/her to follow regarding transportation in the event that bad weather may force us to close school early. Let your student know beforehand how you expect him/her to get home, and how you expect him/her to get into the house in the event weather forces us to close early. This will reduce any confusion for all of us, but especially for your student. Be sure to have updated information in PowerSchool regarding your contact phone numbers and emails as the district sends out closing information via an automated calling system. **Be certain you have not blocked messages/calls from our alert system.** Listen to the news on T.V. or radio if there is indication of inclement weather for notification that schools will dismiss early or if they will open at all on those days.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

According to South Carolina Code of Laws 59-6, 5-50 and S.C. Board of Education Regulation students are required to attend school 170 days out of the 180-day school year. It is important to remember that attendance is a critical factor used in the promotion/retention decisions for grades 6-12.

A student must be in school at least 3 ½ hours to be counted present.

For more information about attendance guidelines, please visit our district website.

Requirements for Extracurricular Activities: Students who participate in extracurricular activities must be in attendance **at least one-half of the school day** on the day of the event or he/she will not be allowed to participate on that day.

Make-Up Work: Assignments that are missed due to absences must be arranged and approved for acceptance by the academic teacher. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate his/her need for makeup work with his/her teachers.

Student Withdrawal: In order for a student to withdraw from GHMS, the parents(s) or legal guardian(s) must sign a withdrawal form. These forms may be obtained from our PowerSchool clerk or our school counseling office. If a student's family changes residence outside the Gold Hill Middle School attendance area, it will be necessary to withdraw the student from school and enroll him/her in the school which is in the appropriate attendance area. All textbooks and library books are to be returned to the school. All owed lunch money and other fees must be paid before the transfer can be complete. The parent must sign a "Release of Permanent Records" so we may send transfer records to the new school.

School Lunch Information

Our cafeteria staff serves breakfast and lunch at school every school day in the cafeteria. Menus, nutritional and allergen information are available on our website (fmsdstudentnutrition.com) and on screens in the cafeteria. There is also a free App available for your smart phone called LINQ Connect. Menus are planned by a Registered Dietitian and include input from parents, staff and students. The menus must meet dietary guidelines that include calorie, saturated fat, sugar, and sodium restrictions. We believe in giving students a variety of healthy options and we offer several fruits and vegetable choices daily.

- A lunch meal includes foods from the five food groups- 2 oz of grains, 2 oz of protein, 1/2 cup fruit, 1/2 cup vegetable, 1 cup of milk. Students may choose all of five groups or at the minimum three food groups out of the five. One choice must be 1/2 cup of a fruit or a vegetable. Students have the option to select up to a cup of fruit and a cup of vegetable with their meal.
- A breakfast meal includes 4 items and students must select 3 of the 4 items and one choice must be a fruit.
- If a student does not take the required food components, then each item on the tray must be charged at a la carte pricing. Our cafeteria staff reminds students to take the required food groups.
- The cafeteria also offers extra sale items like milk, juice, water and snacks to purchase. If you do not want your student to purchase extra sale items, please complete the online form Opt Out for Snacks and Extras.
- All foods served by the cafeteria meets State and Federal guidelines.
- Our kitchens are tree nut and peanut safe.

PIN Number

Each student is set up with a unique meal account identification number to use in the cafeteria to purchase breakfast, lunch and ala carte items. This is a 6 digit number and is the last 6 digits of your student's PowerSchool number. This number should never be shared with other students. Please help your student memorize their pin number.

Meal Payments

Please take advantage of the options to prepay for your student's meals. Prepaid meal accounts help the lunch lines go faster and gives students more time to eat, relax, and socialize. It also gives you the

peace of mind of not having to worry about money every day or that the money might get lost, stolen or used for items other than meals.

There are three easy ways to pay for meals and extras.

- Online via the district website's Pay Fees lunch card feature Quick Pay . This is a free service for adding money to your student's meal account. You are also able to see meal purchases and balances. You can set up email alerts for balances on Parent Portal.
- By a separate check made out to your school's cafeteria. The check should not include other school fees. Please note the child's cafeteria account number on the check - if the check is written for more than one child, each child's account number and the amount to credit to each child should be noted on the check. The check must include a phone number.
- Cash is also accepted as payment but is strongly discouraged as it can be lost. · Transfer of funds from one sibling to another is also available by completing this form: Transfer form

Meal Pricing

Meal prices are set to cover the cost of food and labor. Our department is self-funded and our goal is to break even at the end of the school year. We depend on our students paying for their meals. If you are unable to pay for your meals, please apply for free and reduced priced meals.

Breakfast = \$1.35 Reduced Breakfast Price \$ 0.30 Free to students who qualify for free

Lunch = \$3.00 to 2.50 Reduced Lunch Price: \$0.40 Free to students who qualify for free

The price for adult breakfast is \$3.35; adult lunch is \$5.10.

Free and Reduced Meal Application Program

Our district participates in the USDA Free and Reduced Meal Program. We encourage families to apply if they meet or fall at or below the income guidelines found on each application. Applications are printed in English and Spanish and we can provide any language needed. If another language is needed, please contact our office at 803.802.1968.

To qualify for free or reduced priced meals, students must complete a meal application and have it approved. Applications are available in the school office, cafeteria, district website and you can apply online at <https://linqconnect.com/public/meal-application/new>. Students must reapply each year.

Charge Policy

Our cafeteria does not deny students meals and we allow students to charge meals up to \$15. Automated calls, emails and letter are sent out weekly for students who owe the cafeteria money. Our cafeterias depend on meal payments to provide funding for our program.

Food Allergies & Special Dietary Needs

Due to the number of food allergies, homemade or home baked foods are not allowed to be distributed to students within the classroom or applicable classroom setting. Acceptable foods for distribution are those items that were prepared in a commercial and/or licensed kitchen, and most importantly, are packaged with a label clearly listing the contents and ingredients of the food item. This policy is designed to provide consistency and minimize allergy risks in all classrooms, while maintaining a safe and positive learning environment for all students. (Board Policy J LCDD)
Students with Special Dietary Needs will need to have documentation of their diet changes signed by a medical provider. Please contact the school nurse for the forms to complete.

Wellness Policy

Our district has a Wellness Policy (Board Policy ADF and EFE). Information on the wellness policy and how you can be a part of this committee can be found here -FMSD Wellness Policy info .

Extra-Curricular and Athletic Opportunities

We have many activities in which students may be involved including special interest clubs, sports, band, theater, and academic activities. Students must be in 7th or 8th grade to participate in sports and maintain good academic standing as determined by the school administration. An athletic fee will be assessed to students participating in sports. Students will not be allowed to dress out or participate as a member of a team until fees are paid. All sports are governed by the SC High School League (SCHSL). Eligibility is determined by the SCHSL in conjunction with school board policy. Sports physicals are also required for sports participation. This form is found on our GHMS Athletics website. Our Athletic Director is Coach Tate Hamilton. The Assistant Principal for Athletics is Mr. David Cheske.

Permitted Communication Methods

Students may make calls from the office at the teacher's discretion, but these should be limited to transition and lunch times if possible. Students must have a completed pass in their agenda to use the office phone during instructional time. Students reporting to the office to use the phone without an agenda or pass will be sent back to class. Students and parents should plan ahead so that it will not be necessary to make calls. Please discuss transportation plans, homework, lunch money, medicine, projects, etc. with your student in the morning to reduce the need for the student to make personal phone calls. If you must reach your student regarding a change in transportation plans or an emergency, you may call our main line at 803-548-8300. We will provide the student with the message at the end of the school day prior to dismissal.

School Nurse Services – Mrs. Staci Hyde hydes@fortmillschools.org 803-548-8313

Any student who is not feeling well or has been hurt will be sent to the health room. The health room does not give any medication unless it is brought to the health room by a parent. Written instructions on how the medication is to be administered must accompany the medication. Aspirin can only be given with a doctor's note. Parents are notified if the student is running a fever, vomiting, or is involved in an accident. It is absolutely necessary that we have current home and work information on file at all times. The nurse must be able to reach a parent or a contact person at all times during the day.

Permission for School Administration of Non-Prescription Medication

Non-prescription medications are medicines that you can buy without a written prescription from a health care practitioner. Non-prescription medications are sometimes called “over-the-counter” medicines. In order for a child to be given non-prescription medicines at school, the child’s parent/guardian must sign a permission form. The medication must be in the original, marked container with the manufacturer’s seal unbroken. A medication permission form (M105) will need to be completed on each medication that is to be given at school. If a non-prescription (OTC) medication is written as a prescription by the health care provider, the child’s health care provider and the child’s parent or guardian must sign a permission form (M 105). The medication should be in a labeled bottle by the pharmacy with the child’s name, the name of the medication, and the times of administration. Whenever possible, the expected duration of treatment shall be stated. If a non-prescription medicine is currently being given at school or home and needed while your child is on a field trip, the parent/guardian must bring and supply the medicine to school by the day of the field trip. It must be in the original, marked container, with the manufacturer’s seal unbroken and have the M105 form completed for each medication and signed by the parent/guardian. Additional labeled bottles may be obtained from your pharmacy. No Ziploc bags will be accepted. A responsible adult should deliver the medicine and the permission form to the school. The medicine must be in the original container with the label on it and manufacturer seal unbroken. The dosage of the medicine cannot exceed the recommended dosage from the manufacturer without a prescription from the child’s health care practitioner. *Created on 2/12/2015 - Last updated on 3/18/2019*

Permission for School Administration of Prescription Medications

Prescription medications are medicines that require a written prescription from a health care practitioner. In order for a child to be given a prescription medicine at school, the child’s health care practitioner and the child’s parent or guardian must sign a permission form. A medication permission form (M105) must be completed by the health care practitioner for each prescription medication to be given at school. A responsible adult should deliver the medicine and the permission form to the school. The medicine must be in the original container with the label on it from their pharmacy. No Ziploc bags will be accepted. If a prescription medicine is currently being given at school and needed while your child is on a field trip, the parent/guardian must bring and supply the medicine to school by the day of the field trip. It must be in the original, marked container. Additional labeled bottles may be obtained from your pharmacy. No Ziploc bags will be accepted. *Created on 2/12/2015 - Last updated on 8/11/2015*

Behavioral Expectations

The Gold Hill Middle School faculty and staff have the best interests of our students in mind. Therefore, we believe in maintaining a secure, supportive, and safe learning environment for all of our students that promotes high expectations for student achievement and behavior. We believe in a school that provides productive, mutually respectful relationships among staff and students. Our teachers provide positive learning experiences that encourage these relationships and reinforce appropriate behavior. Disruptive behavior is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action. Rules are a matter of common sense and courtesy. GHMS students should be well behaved and contributing members of our community that take pride in their school. Students, faculty, and staff have the right to feel safe, secure, respected, and valued. Students are encouraged to inform their teachers, counselors, or administrators of any situation which may cause harm to themselves or other students.

Risk Assessments

Should a concern arise about a student being a danger to him/herself or others, district protocols for conducting a risk assessment (suicide and/or threat) will be followed to the extent appropriate. These assessments may include interviews with students and staff, a review of student records, and consultation with district mental health staff, local law enforcement, or other community agencies that help support our schools and students. If, as part of its assessment and response, the district determines there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, it may disclose personally identifiable information from education records to any person whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

Cell Phones/Smart Watches

Cell phones must be turned OFF and put away upon entering the building (7:45 – 3:10). Cell phones should be kept out of sight until exiting the building at dismissal. A cell phone may not be used during the day unless an employee at GHMS gives permission. The student may NOT use a cell phone to call or text parents during the school day without an employee's permission. Devices may be used in the classroom for educational purposes while under the supervision and permission of a teacher.

- 1st violation – warning and confiscation of the phone until the end of the day.
- 2nd violation – ISS lunch detention and confiscation of the phone until the end of the day.
- 3rd violation – afterschool detention and confiscation of the phone until the end of the day.
- 4th violation and beyond – 1 day of ISS for each offense and a plan for future cell phone use at school involving a conference with the parent.

*Additional consequences may be added by discretion of the administration based on the severity of the infraction.

Violation and refusal to give school employee the electronic device will also result in additional consequences.

Smart Watches: Smart watches may be worn to school; however, these devices will be treated like cell phones and must be put away until dismissal.

Disclaimer - Students will be given more serious consequences for the following inappropriate uses of electronic equipment: inappropriate use of an electronic device to take pictures or videos, inappropriate texting or messages, any use which may be seen as threatening to anyone or anything at Gold Hill Middle School, or any major violation of our district's acceptable use policy. An act or acts which are not covered by these regulations and which are of such nature as to pose a threat to the physical or mental welfare of the students, the teachers, and other school personnel or which create a disruption in the orderly operation of any phase of the school program may result in suspension or expulsion.

Student Dress – Board Approved 1/21/20

The Fort Mill School District's Student Policy JICA Student Dress/Uniforms states "Although the responsibility for the dress and appearance of students rests with each student and his/her parent/guardian, students are expected to show pride in themselves and their schools by having their dress and appearance in accordance with good acceptable standards. The school administration and board discourage extreme styles of dress and grooming. Students will dress in appropriate attire. Students are expected to dress in clothing that abides by the district dress code policy. Logos or clothing that promotes alcohol, drugs, tobacco, racism, hate, gang affiliation, nudity, violence, or profanity is not allowed. No clothing or accessories are allowed to disrupt the educational process. The administration reserves the right to determine what is appropriate for school. Dress code violations will be handled with dignity, discretion and respect toward all students by school staff members throughout the district. The board may establish such administrative rules and procedures as necessary to enforce this policy."

Students will follow these guidelines during the traditional school day. School administration reserves the right to permit exceptions to the policy for school-sanctioned events. In the interests of health, safety, cleanliness, decency, and decorum, students will follow these guidelines:

- Proper shoes must be worn at all times for safety reasons. Shoes with cleats may not be worn outside of sanctioned athletic events.
- Logos or clothing that promotes alcohol, drugs, tobacco, racism, hate, gang affiliation, violence, nudity, or profanity is not allowed. No clothing or accessories are allowed to disrupt the educational process. The administration reserves the right to determine what is appropriate for school.
- Students may wear shorts, dresses, skirts, etc. whose length is no shorter than the mid-thigh. Tops must be long enough that they can be tucked into pants or shorts. No headwear (hats, caps, hoods, etc.) or sunglasses may be worn in the building by students upon arrival and until dismissal.
- The following items are not appropriate for school:
 - Undergarments that are visible.
 - Pants or jeans with holes, tears or tattered to the extent that skin or undergarments are visible above the mid-thigh.
 - Tops with straps that are less than 3-fingers wide of the student.

If there is a disagreement between students and/or parents/legal guardians and the staff regarding the appropriateness of clothing, the administration will use discretion to make the decision. Disciplinary action regarding the enforcement of the policy is listed below:

- If violation can be resolved in a timely manner, student will remain/return to class without further disciplinary action.
- Following 3 unresolved offenses/violations, all subsequent violations will require parent conference and detention.

In all offense levels, if the article of clothing promotes extreme offenses such as acts of violence, profanity, nudity, hate-filled language, or other conditions presenting a potential disruption to the learning environment, then the student may be sent to ISS until suitable clothing is brought to the school.

Administrative Discipline Guide

GHMS students are well behaved, contributing members of our community, and they take pride in the climate of their school. Students are expected to conduct themselves in such a way as to promote the best interest of GHMS, its students, and its faculty. Furthermore, teachers and administrators at GHMS are committed to the principle that all students have the right to learn and are dedicated to working with parents and the community to fulfill this principle. **The GHMS administration team reserves the right to handle any discipline situation as they see fit for the protection of our students and to maintain instructional integrity.**

Attendance: Come to school on time, prepared, and ready to engage in learning. Failure to attend class after reporting to school may result in school level interventions including lunch detention (LD), in school suspension (ISS), or out of school suspension (OSS). An unauthorized walkout from a classroom, the school building or school grounds may result in ISS and/or OSS.

Gum: Gum is not allowed in school. Students with gum will lose a point on their Make Today Count (MTC) sheet during their first two infractions. An ISS Lunch will be given for every other infraction.

Unnecessary Items: Unnecessary objects brought to school may be confiscated until picked up by a parent or until the end of the school year. In addition, students may receive a school consequence based on the frequency and severity of the violation. These items include, but are not limited to: fidget spinners, headgear, spray perfumes/colognes, nail polish, gadgets/toys, laser lights, handheld video game consoles, trading cards, iPods/mp3s, cameras, Bluetooth/portable speakers, billfold chains, and choke collars.

Respect: In general, demonstrate *respect*. Good discipline centers on respect. Respect for *other people* (teachers, staff members, visitors, your fellow students), respect for *our school building* (pick up paper and other trash, walk in the halls, do not damage or deface the school or furnishings), and respect for *yourself*. Before you can really respect others, you must respect yourself.

Disrespect: All students will behave in a respectful manner toward staff, students, and visitors. Examples of disrespectful behavior include, but are not limited to walking away when a staff member is talking to you, verbally responding to a staff member in a rude manner, refusal to properly identify self, displaying uncivil/rude/curt/impudent behavior, and challenging authority. Consequences for disrespect include appropriate teacher level interventions, ISS and/or OSS.

Food/Beverages: All food and beverages must be consumed in the cafeteria or other designated area as determined by administration. Water may be brought to school for “during the day consumption.” It must be in a container that has a screw top (no straws) to prevent unwanted spills or damage to personal or school items. Teachers reserve the right to determine where these beverages are to be stored in their classrooms in order to protect electronic devices and other school property. Students who violate this rule will be asked to dispose of their food/beverages.

Classroom/School Disruptions: You are entitled to a learning environment that is free of unnecessary disruptions. Any physical or verbal disturbance within the school setting or during related activities is prohibited. Disruptions include, but are not limited to excessive noise, propelling objects, horseplay, harassing others, refusal to remain seated, pushing, shoving, hitting, kicking, biting, etc. Consequences for disruptions include but, are not limited to: warning/conferences, recovery room (STOP) visits, detentions, other appropriate teacher interventions, and referral to school administration. Serious disruptions may result in ISS or OSS.

Profanity/Obscenity: Cursing or using abusive language is considered obscene. Also included are displays and actions of an obscene nature, clothing/jewelry/items with suggestive or offensive messages, and signs or writing containing obscene material. Obscene or pornographic material in any form is prohibited. Consequences may result in ISS, OSS, or Expulsion. Any student who directs profane language or gestures at a staff member will be subject to suspension, expulsion, or referral to the alternative school.

Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection (PDA): Students should not be holding hands, hugging, touching, or kissing while on campus or at a school event. Students engaging in this type of behavior will be referred to administration. Consequences for public displays of affection include lunch detentions or ISS. Repeated offenses may lead to OSS.

Distribution of Unauthorized Materials: The principal must approve and authorize student distribution of any materials.

Threats/Fighting/Assault: Fighting involves two or more parties striking each other for the purpose of causing harm. Conveying to cause bodily harm through gestures, notes, or comments is considered a threat. Blackmail or intimidation of students or staff is also prohibited. Instigating others to fight through actions, comments, or written messages is also prohibited. Consequences for the above offenses may result in suspension or expulsion. Law enforcement may be called by administration if needed. Any student who attempts to assault or assaults school personnel, including spitting, will be subject to permanent expulsion.

Theft/Attempted Theft: Students will not steal or attempt to steal property. Furthermore, students will not possess or attempt to possess stolen property. It will be considered attempted theft if a student goes into/through another person's belongings. Minor thefts or first offenses will be handled at the discretion of the principal. Serious or repeated thefts will result in suspension, expulsion, or referral to the alternative school. Law enforcement may be called if needed.

Tobacco: Students are prohibited from the use and possession of tobacco products, lighters, and matches on school property or during any related activities (field trips, school bus, and extracurricular activities). Students violating this policy will be subject to suspension.

Chemicals/Drugs/Alcohol (including: electronic cigarettes – e-cigs, vapes, juuls, e-hookahs, mods, pods, e-cig pens, etc.): Possession/use of alcohol, marijuana, other illegal drugs, look-alike drugs, inhalants, electronic cigarettes or components of such item, drug paraphernalia, or any substance represented as a drug while on school property or engaged in school sponsored events is prohibited. The distribution (sale, gift, sharing, taking orders, or arranging for sale) of drugs/alcohol/vapes/pods, etc. on school property or at school sponsored activities is also prohibited. Students violating this policy may be subject to expulsion from school and law enforcement will be notified. (AR JICG-R 5 Issued 5/18)

Students **MAY NOT** carry any type of medication during school – not even a *Tylenol*®. If you take medication or regularly need to take a pain reliever, your parents must complete forms provided by the school nurse. The school nurse must store this medication and log each time it is taken.

Student Disorder: A student or group of students who is involved in student disorder, which includes seizure of a building or grounds, or attempted control of such, or any type of disorder which disrupts the activities of the school by sit-ins, walk-outs, boycotts of classes, etc., will be subject to suspension or expulsion.

Defacing/Destroying School Property: Damaging, defacing, or destroying school property, other students' property, or any other private property while under the school's supervision is prohibited. Students or parents will be financially responsible for such actions. In addition, students may be subject to suspension or expulsion. Law enforcement may be called if needed.

Repeated Minor Violations: In cases where a written record substantiates repeated minor violations by a given student, the student may be suspended, expelled, or referred to the alternative school program for placement.

Weapons: The possession or representation of a firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, operative or inoperative, on school property or during any school activity is prohibited. Possession includes bringing a firearm to school or storing a firearm on school property. Firearms include pellet guns, BB guns, CO air pistols, or any other device which meets the definition of a firearm in the Code of Laws. Possession of look-alike weapons is also prohibited. The principal will determine if the look-alike is considered a weapon. Violation of this rule results in expulsion from school and notification of law enforcement.

- A. Other Weapons: Students are prohibited from possessing knives, brass knuckles, blackjacks, razor blades, box cutters, heavy chains, clubs, pepper gas, mace, or martial arts objects on school property or at school sponsored activities. Consequences include suspension or expulsion from school and notification of law enforcement.
- B. Bombs: Any device brought to school that contains combustible material is prohibited. Consequences include suspension or expulsion.
- C. Possession of bullets, shells, or objects that appear to be ammunition is prohibited. Possession of fireworks or any small explosive or smoke producing device is prohibited. Consequences include suspension for the first offense and expulsion for repeat offenses.

Bullying: Any student who feels he/she has been subjected to harassment, intimidation, or bullying (including cyberbullying/electronic bullying) is encouraged to file a complaint in accordance with procedures established by the superintendent. Complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and confidentially. Reports by students may be made anonymously. The district prohibits retaliation or reprisal in any form against a student who has filed a complaint or report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The district also prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. The school board expects students to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified, and respectful manner. Any student who is found to have engaged in the prohibited actions outlined in this section will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. Students may also be referred to law enforcement officials. The district will take all other appropriate steps to correct or rectify the situation.

Cyberbullying: Bullying or harassment that occurs online is called Cyberbullying. This can take place in an email, a text message, Instant Messaging, an online game, or comments/images posted on social networking sites. Incidents that occur off campus will involve our school resource officer. However, GHMS administrators have the right to become involved with cases involving off campus Cyberbullying if it causes disruption in, or interference with, the orderly operation of school.

Sexual Harassment: Fort Mill School district prohibits sexual harassment of students by employees, other students, or third parties. Students must avoid any action or conduct which could be viewed as sexual harassment. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct when the following occurs:

- a. Submission to such conduct is made either expressly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education.
- b. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's education or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive school environment.
- c. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for any decisions affecting a student.

Accumulated Suspensions: A student subject to OSS a third time in any given year may be recommended for expulsion or referred to the alternative school program for placement.

Forgery: The consequences for forgery are as follows: The **first** offense will result in a conference with the SRO and school administrator. The parent will be notified and documentation of the incident will be placed in the student's file. In addition, a first offense will result in a minimum of a lunch detention. The **second** offense will result in an afterschool detention. The parent will be notified and a documentation of the incident will be placed in the student's file.

Academic Dishonesty: There are many forms of academic dishonesty. In the broadest sense, it is any act that enhances a student's grade unethically and unfairly. The following are some examples of academic dishonesty:

- Copying other students' work or allowing your own work to be copied.
- Using unauthorized notes or sources when taking tests.
- Plagiarism – using another person's work without authorization or acknowledging through proper citation
- Stealing or otherwise obtaining test materials before tests.
- Submitting work that was previously completed/submitted in that course or another course.

Teachers will contact the parent of any student engaged in academic dishonesty to establish a plan for restoration. The consequences could include redoing the assignment for a max grade of a 60 or even time in ISS (lunch detention/afterschool detention).

Other: Any acts that are not covered by these regulations and that are of such nature as to pose a threat to the physical or mental welfare of the students, teachers, and other school personnel, or which create a disruption to the orderly operation of any phase of the school program or any of its services, or which cause defacement of any school property will subject offenders to suspension or expulsion.

Do NOT:

- ***Be in possession of or under the influence of drugs and/or alcoholic beverages of any kind.*** Not only is it against the school rules, it is against the law.
- ***Be in possession of or use tobacco products or electronic cigarettes of any type.*** Don't even bring it/them to school or "carry" for someone else.
- ***Be in possession of anything that could be considered a weapon.*** Of course, you know you cannot bring guns and knives to school, but do not even bring things that could be considered or used as a weapon. This is big trouble. We want you and everyone else to feel safe in school.
- ***Say or do something to any adult or student at school that could be considered profane or threatening.*** At all times, students are to act respectful toward all adults at school. Watch what you say, and remember, so often it is not *what* you say but *how* you say it. Be respectful and you will be respected.
- ***Use exceedingly aggressive behavior or fight.*** Problems are never properly solved by aggression. If you are having a problem with another student and need to talk with someone, your teacher, counselor, school resource officer, or administrator is available. **It will never be acceptable at Gold Hill Middle School to solve problems by fighting or being aggressive.**

Disciplinary Consequence Descriptions

Silent Lunch

Silent lunch is a consequence given by a classroom teacher for other minor violations. It is held in a designated classroom. Students are permitted to obtain their lunch (if applicable) from the cafeteria and then report to the designated area.

Lunch Detention

Lunch detention is a consequence given by administration, and is held in the recovery/ISS room. Lunch detentions are consequences that are given for minor violations. Multiple days of lunch detention can be given for a violation.

Student Time-Out Periods (STOP)

Purpose/Expectations:

- To provide a “cooling off” period for disruptive students while maximizing the amount of instruction time free from unwanted classroom disruptions.
- Students are still responsible for work that may be missed during the class, and they will be given the opportunity to complete class assignments while in the recovery room. Students are expected to be respectful and productive while in STOP; failure to comply can result in further consequences.

Process:

- Assigned by the classroom teacher for a disruption of class that prevents student learning.
- May be assigned by the individual teacher for remainder of that period or any portion of that period.
- Any STOP visit assigned must be accompanied by a phone call or email from that teacher to that student’s parent to notify of the assigned visit.

Impact/Timeline:

- **First STOP Visit** – Parent is contacted by referring teacher.
- **Second STOP Visit** – Parent is contacted by referring teacher.
- **Third STOP Visit** – Parent is contacted by referring teacher and ISS personnel notifies school counselor and/or admin to set up a conference with the student to discuss skills and strategies for appropriate classroom behavior.
- **Fourth STOP Visit** – Parent is contacted by referring teacher. Student meets with his/her administrator and is assigned a lunch period from administration.
- **Fifth and Sixth STOP Visits** – Parent is contacted by referring teacher. Student meets with his/her administrator and is assigned 1 day of ISS or other appropriate consequence as determined by the administrator.
- **7th Visit (and all subsequent visits)** – Parent is contacted by the referring teacher. Student meets with his/her administrator and is assigned 2 days of ISS or other appropriate consequence as determined by the administrator.

**** Students sent to STOP more than once in a day will be assigned ISS for the remainder of that day.*

In-School Suspension (ISS)

The main objective for this program is to keep students in school while trying to modify unwanted behaviors and give students the opportunity to maintain their academic work. Students serving ISS will eat lunch in the ISS classroom. If a student is absent on the day that ISS is assigned, the day will be served when the student returns. Students who violate ISS rules may be subject to an immediate Out-of-School Suspension (OSS). **A student serving ISS for a full day may not be permitted to participate in school activities at GHMS during the day(s) he/she is in ISS.**

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)

Students who make poor decisions and choose to break rules at GHMS may be subject to out-of-school suspension. While suspended, students are prohibited from attending **ANY** school activity including after school events and field trips. Classwork may not be provided during this time.

Expulsion

Major violations may result in recommendation for expulsion and involvement of our school resource officer (SRO). The following are considered major offenses and could lead to expulsion from school:

Excuse from Physical Education

Every student is required to enroll in Physical Education. This course is a semester course (18 weeks) for all students. If it is medically necessary for a student to limit physical activity, the student must have a written note. In case of a long-term excuse from physical education, students must submit a physician's note to the school nurse. Students who have written notes excusing them from participating in physical education will also be expected to refrain from physical activity during our outside "recess" time and after school activities.

Medical Release Forms

Gold Hill Middle School requires that a Fort Mill School District Release Form be completed by parents who want the teachers or school counselors to share medical or academic information with a third party (i.e. doctor, pediatrician, family therapist, legal servicer, etc.). Please speak with your student's grade level counselor to complete a form. Parents will need to provide the following information on the form: Doctor's name, doctor's address, doctor's phone number, doctor's fax number, and deadline for form completion. Please note that we reserve the right to provide our teachers with time to thoroughly complete the information. We require a two-week window for form completion. The forms will be returned to the student's counselor and then sent directly to the doctor.

FERPA Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools, which receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. For further information regarding your rights under FERPA, please refer to the "For Parents" section of the school district's webpage at www.fortmillschools.org.

Classroom Activities/Celebrations – Acceptable Food Guidelines Reminder

Effective with the 2014-2015 school year, homemade or home baked foods are no longer allowed to be distributed to students within the classroom or applicable classroom setting. Acceptable foods for distribution are those items that were prepared in a commercial and/or licensed kitchen, and most importantly, are packaged with a label clearly listing the contents and ingredients of the food item. With the continued rise in severe and often life-threatening food allergies, this policy is designed to provide consistency and minimize allergy risks in all classrooms district-wide, while maintaining a safe and positive learning environment for all students. It is important to note that the policy does not apply to a student's personal lunch. The policy is part of a larger, comprehensive Food Allergy Guideline approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2014, which can be found on the district's website at www.fortmillschools.org under "Board Policies." Further questions can also be directed to the principal, school nurse, or by contacting the district office at 803-548-2527.

Crisis Interventions

When a student's actions pose a clear, present, and imminent physical danger to self and/or others and the student has the ability to cause such harm, school staff may use reasonable and necessary restraint strategies, in accordance with a nationally - recognized, externally - developed professional training program.

Restraints: For the purposes of these guidelines, physical restraint is defined as a personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of an individual to move his or her arms, legs, or head freely. This definition encompasses mechanical restraints, further defined as a device that restricts the movement or function of a child or a portion of a child's body.

Restraint, as defined, by these guidelines, does not include the following:

1. temporarily holding an individual to help him or her participate in education or daily living activities;
2. escorting techniques, where a student is provided limited physical encouragement to help him or her move from one location to another without rising to the level of physically forcing compliance (e.g., hand on the back or a hand on the elbow);
3. chemical restraints (medication for safety or behavioral supports) determined by medical personnel;
4. appropriate use of adaptive equipment or products, provided they are used in accordance with manufacturers' recommended usage.
 - a) Adaptive equipment may include, but is not limited to, adaptive seating products or therapeutically prescribed devices such as weighted vests.
 - b) If adaptive equipment, such as Rifton chair or weighted vest is used for the purpose of limiting mobility or as a punitive measure, its use constitutes restraint.

The use of restraint is limited to emergency situations where the behavior of the student poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others and the student has the ability to cause such harm. Restraint may be used only as a last resort after proper positive behavioral interventions and de-escalation techniques have failed to de-escalate the risk of injury.

Restraint should never be used:

1. as punishment;
2. to force compliance or address non-compliance;
3. as a substitute for appropriate educational support;
4. in response to property destruction;
5. in response to a student's flight, escape, or running away, unless there is *imminent* risk of injury related to the escape;
6. in response to verbal threats and profanity that do not rise to the level of physical harm unless the student demonstrates a means of carrying out the threats;
7. longer than needed to resolve the risk of actual harm.

The use of prone restraints (face down on stomach) with the exception of approved Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) endorsed floor restraints, supine restraints (face up on the back), or any hold or maneuver that places pressure or weight on the student's chest, lungs, sternum, diaphragm, back, neck, or throat are strictly forbidden. Moreover, the degree of force used must not exceed what is necessary to protect the student or others from imminent bodily injury.

Necessary Documentation and Review: The use of restraint in the school setting triggers the district's obligation to create and maintain specific documentation regarding the incident. Documentation must include:

1. actions attempted prior to the restraint in an effort to manage or de-escalate the situation;
2. a clear description of the safety concerns posed to the student or others;
3. student's behavior before, during, and after restraint;
4. location of the restraint;
5. amount of time in restraint;
6. a description of the physical restraint techniques used and training personnel received prior to implementing restraint;
7. names and position titles of personnel involved with the incident;
8. date and time the administrator was notified;
9. date and time the parents were notified and by whom;
10. name and position of person(s) completing the documentation.

Training: Restraint training must be provided, and reviewed, at least annually, by a credentialed trainer through a nationally recognized, externally developed professional training program. The training must include the following components:

1. prevention of behavior problems through a positive behavioral supports climate;
2. conflict prevention and conflict management skills;
3. de-escalation skills that enable staff members to respond to students in ways more likely to calm, rather than escalate, the situation;
4. information on physical and emotional risks of escalation and restraint;
5. instruction on personal safety skills for staff who work with students who are more likely to present safety concerns;
6. prohibition on the use of prone restraints (face down on stomach) with the exception of approved Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) endorsed floor restraints, supine restraints (face up on the back), or any hold or maneuver that places pressure or weight on the student's chest, lungs, sternum, diaphragm, back, neck, or throat.

The training program used must include some method of assessment that ensures appropriate skills are in place. The program must also provide documentation that a participant has successfully completed the training, either through a certificate or other credential. Fort Mill Schools must keep a list of those who have completed training, including a description of the content of the training, on file. The school district retains discretion as to which personnel should receive restraint training. However, training must be provided to enough staff members that the school district can ensure a sufficient number of staff is available if restraint is used.

Student Textbooks

Students are expected to ensure that the textbook is returned in the condition in which it was issued. Students are advised to place a book cover on all textbooks as a layer of protection for the textbook and state assigned barcode. If a student loses a textbook, then he/she is responsible for payment to replace the book. The student should let their teacher or office know if their textbook is lost. When the textbook is paid for, the student will receive another textbook. Money can be refunded if the lost textbook is recovered. Students are always responsible for their textbooks. Lockers should be kept locked; combinations should be kept confidential; books should never be left unattended or loaned to others.

Lockers and Locks

Each student will be assigned a P.E. locker. Students must have a lock to secure any items in his/her locker. P.E. teachers must be given the combination to the lock. The school does not assume responsibility for the contents of a student's locker if the items are stolen or lost. Students are financially responsible for school issued textbooks. **Lockers are the property of the school and are subject to inspection by school personnel at any time.**

Internet Access and Usage

Internet accessibility is provided to GHMS students to support the instructional program. Every effort will be made to provide appropriate instruction and student supervision. However, the district/school cannot completely guarantee that a student will not access inappropriate material. Therefore, parents and students are asked to exercise responsibility for the appropriate direction and use of internet resources as well. In addition, written parental permission is required and will remain on file in order for the student to be granted access to the Internet at school. Failure to comply with this expectation may result in a denial of access to the internet and/or disciplinary action.

Class Interruptions/Forgotten & Dropped Off Items

Class interruptions shall be limited only to real emergencies (Section 59-1440, SC Code of Laws, 1976 as amended). Any outside interference with continuous progress of teaching and learning shall be considered an interruption. Parents are not allowed to visit a classroom unless invited by the teacher or they have permission from the administration. Parents/visitors may not go to hallways without permission. Deliveries of flowers, balloons, or gifts, visits from salespersons, students, or other unauthorized persons are prohibited. **Items brought by parents will be held in our front office for student pick-up. It is your child's responsibility to retrieve these items.**

Safety and Emergency Procedures

Fire drills are held monthly. Severe weather drills and lock down drills are also held during the school year. Students are expected to follow the directives of all school staff members. When exiting the building as part of a safety procedure/drill, students are expected to move quietly in a single file line to their designated areas. The same procedure will be followed when re-entering the building.

Parent Portal

Parent Portal allows parents to view their child's attendance, grades, assignments, schedule, and teacher comments. Parents are able to set up automatic e-mail reports from the Parent Portal system if they desire. Parents have access to review their child's current contact information, which helps to ensure the school maintains accurate records. There is a computer kiosk set up in the main office for parents to access parent portal, if needed. Please contact our PowerSchool Clerk, Mrs. Dawn Fite, if you need assistance: fited@fortmillschools.org 803-548-8312.

Grading Scale

The Fort Mill School District uses a ten-point grading scale.

Grade	Score Range
A	100 – 90
B	89 – 80
C	79 – 70
D	69 – 60
F	59 – 0

Progress Reports and Report Cards

Progress reports will be digital. Parents should log into parent portal mid-quarter to check their student's grades. Paper copies of report cards will be sent home at the end of each quarter (nine weeks). **Report card envelopes should be returned signed by a parent.** If a student or parent has any questions about grades or student progress, the student's teacher should be the point of first contact. Parents are encouraged to request conferences with the teacher and or student's team whenever necessary. At the end of the 1st and 3rd quarter, letters are mailed home to the parents of any students failing a core subject for that nine weeks.

Promotion/Placement/Retention

Students must pass three of the four core academic classes in order to be promoted to the next grade. A student who fails science and/or social studies may be placed into the next grade level. When a student is considered "placed," s/he is ineligible to try out for fall sports the following year. Seventh and eighth grade students will not be promoted if they fail the same core subject in two consecutive years. Parent conferences for students who face potential retention (being held back in the same grade) will be conducted in person or by phone call. Parents/Legal guardians may appeal a retention decision to the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. The appeal must be made in writing with the reasons for disagreement with the decision within two weeks of the notification of the retention. Summer school may be required in any of these circumstances and serves as remediation for that subject if successfully completed.

*** In order for a student to participate in the GHMS 8th Grade Recognition Program, **he/she must pass 3 core subjects with a 60 or above for the school year.**

Systems of Extra Support

Advisory: Our **advisory** block occurs most days of the week for up to 30 minutes. Students may see teachers for academic assistance, make-up work, or remediation according to our advisory plan. Agendas and SmartPass are used to secure passes to see teachers other than the student's homeroom teacher during this time. Some students may also receive additional support in reading and/or math during this time. Additionally, this time is used for our sustained silent reading literacy initiative as well as our "One Book, One School" (OBOS) initiative.

Homework Helpers: During the week, students may report to **Homework Helpers** for extra help with incomplete, but attempted math homework. Students are expected to bring their attempted math homework from the previous night along with questions they may have for completing the assignment correctly. This math help is typically available from 7:45-8:05am four days a week and is a coordinated effort of our math teachers.

Working Lunch: Several of our teachers and our specialists provide students additional academic assistance during lunchtime. This is typically referred to as a **Working Lunch**. During this time, students eat lunch in the teacher's classroom or academic lab while working on completing assignments, making up missed work, and/or receiving remediation/assistance, or individual instruction as needed. Students may request or be assigned a Working Lunch by their teacher(s).

GHMS PTO

GHMS has a Parent Teacher Organization. The PTO sponsors School Board Candidate Forums, provides incentive awards for students and teachers, and conducts fundraisers for the school. The Gold Hill Middle School PTO makes the difference between a good school and an excellent school. The PTO lends a helping hand, boosts morale, works with the students, and lends guidance and support to the teachers and the administration. All parents, friends, and members of the community are invited to join the PTO and should participate in the activities of Gold Hill Middle School. Join this worthwhile organization and help others support GHMS. The e-mail address for our PTO is goldhillmiddlepto@gmail.com.

Visitors and School Safety

Parents are always welcome, but are encouraged to make an appointment to see a teacher or administrator. Our teachers designate Mondays or Fridays as their primary parent conference days. You may email your child's homeroom teacher or school counselor to set up a parent-teacher conference. Teachers and administrators are unavailable for conferences between 7:45–8:10am and 3:10–3:40pm, as all are supervising students and managing school arrival and dismissal procedures. For security and safety, all visitors, including school volunteers, must use the main entrance, sign in, note the purpose(s) for your visit, and obtain a printed name badge. This badge is to be visibly worn on the upper torso. Any student or staff member who notices an unfamiliar person on campus or in the building without a visitor's badge, should immediately report his/her presence to the closest adult.

Conclusion

The key to a good school lies in the pride that we have in our school and the degree to which each of us accepts our personal responsibility for the welfare of the school as a whole. The procedures that have been listed herein are simple reminders about things that a good citizen would do on one's own. It is firmly believed that the majority do what is appropriate without the threat of punishment. However, it is important that all students clearly understand the expectations held for them and know the consequences if privileges are abused or rules are broken.

It is our goal to have a successful and rewarding year for the faculty, staff, students and parents at Gold Hill Middle School. Thank you for taking the time to read through this Student-Agenda/Handbook. Hopefully, it has been helpful in giving you important information about our school. We invite you to talk to your student's teachers or contact the office if there are other questions. We hope this is your *best school year ever*.

Kindest Regards,

The GHMS Administrative Team

All district programs are operated without discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, or handicap in compliance with Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504 and all other applicable Civil Rights Laws. The Director of Special Services has been designated to coordinate activities related to nondiscrimination. The director may be contacted at Fort Mill School District No. 4, 2233 Deerfield Drive, Fort Mill, SC. (548-2527) The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 provides that parents of students, regardless of age, who are or have been in attendance at an institution have the right to inspect and review their educational records within a reasonable period of time (not to exceed 45 days) after making a request. Where records contain information on more than one student, the student or parent may only see what is pertinent to the student. REMEMBER, SCHOOL RECORDS AND STUDENT DATA ARE CONFIDENTIAL.

What is Ci3T?

The Ci3T model of prevention assists schools in creating a comprehensive, systems-oriented approach to (a) integrate efforts to support the academic, behavioral, and social/emotional competencies of all students; (b) promote collaboration and teaming between all school and community stakeholders; and (c) support educators' efficacy and well-being through data-informed professional learning, clear expectations for staff and students, and supportive, positive environments. At GHMS stakeholders have created a matrix that helps make expectations clear. Students will be taught the expectations, review the expectations, and be held accountable for following the expectations. Bulldogs show respect, responsibility, and effort.

Gold Hill Middle School Student Expectation Matrix

	Classroom	Hallway	Cafeteria	Bathroom	Black Top	Bus	Arrival/Dismissal
Respect	-Follow Directions -Use kind words and actions	-Keep hands to yourself -Be courteous of other classes	-Listen to and follow adult requests the first time asked -Be considerate of others' area and food	-Respect others' privacy (Do not bring cell phone) -Take care of your own business (Flush toilet, wash hands)	-Respect other people's personal space -Be kind to peers while playing games	-Listen to and follow the bus driver's rules -Use kind words towards the bus driver and others	-Respond to adult calls immediately -Use indoor voices
Responsibility	-Make up work when absent -Use time wisely	-Walk -Recognize and walk away from drama	-Clean up after yourself -Stay in your seat	-Place trash in can -Report any problems to an adult.	-Report problems/unsafe behavior to staff -Line up when whistle blows	-Use self-control (Remain in seat, speak in a quiet, inside voice) -Be alert and watch for your stop on the way home	-Stay in assigned area -Be on time
Effort	-Complete work with best effort -Participate in class activities	-Use hallway time appropriately and efficiently -Walk directly to next location	-Clear away trash -Keep tables and floors clean	-Use restroom appropriately -Return to class quickly	-Include others in activities -Wear appropriate clothes and shoes	-Stay clear of moving bus -Keep hands and feet to yourself	-Show a positive attitude -Fulfill before and after school commitments

Parent Responsibilities

Academic	Behavior	Social Emotional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ensure students are at school on time and staying at school all day (daily) -Be engaged with tracking grades/progress (weekly) -Monitor the WAAG (weekly) -Be responsive to teachers (respond timely) -Provide a regular study time and place to support academic expectations -Reinforce appropriate academic behavior at home -Minimize student interruptions during school hours (e.g., doctor, dentist - absences and early dismissals) -Ensure students have the tools they need to succeed (each day) (supplies, technology, lunch, fees paid) -Attend/participate in parent/school meetings (as scheduled) -Help students develop a plan of attack to achieve academic success (quarterly) -Monitor homework completion/turn in (daily) -Review school communications as needed -Find ways to get students extra assistance/tutoring when appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ensure students are well nourished and have good sleep/rest (recommended 9-11 hrs per day) -Keep contact information current (Student records) -Support and model positive, respectful expected behaviors at school (Matrix) -Offer choices to children for completing learning tasks, chores, and other commitments (executive functioning development) -Use precorrection to encourage desired behavior expectations and prevent challenging behaviors -Require school attendance, to be on time and ready to learn (daily, attendance records) -Help students identify how their behaviors are impacting others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Model positive, respectful behavior -Have discussions about +/- behavior -Praise SE success -Monitor and model healthy, positive social media interaction (daily) -Dinner conversations: engage positive school attitudes -Model positive conversation/debate tactics -Make education a priority -Build parent/teacher partnership to assist student and ensure success -Communicate social concerns (family changes) with school faculty and staff -Support teacher actions in the classroom (reinforce corrections/praises) -Provide lots of opportunities for students to make responsible decisions and a net to catch and learn when they don't succeed -Be aware of social skills being taught at school -Talk about the relationship issues they are facing and encourage positive, encouraging solutions